

What does “Man Created in the Image of God” mean?

The first chapter of the first book of the Bible states that mankind was created in the image and likeness of God. This paper’s intent is to define what that means in the context of scripture.

What does the Creation Story State?

Many Christians and Jews are familiar with the depiction of the creation of mankind in scripture. Genesis 1:26-7 states:

*“And God said, Let us make man in our image (**selem, tseh'-lem**), after our likeness (**dmut, dem-ooth**): and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”*

Man in the image of God or God in the image of man?

The idea of man being made in the image of God is referred to in Christian theology as the **imago Dei** and has been discussed by a number of Jewish and Christian scholars over the centuries. “Following tradition, a number of Jewish scholars, such as Saadia Gaon and Philo, argued that being made in the image of God does not mean that God possesses human-like features, but rather the reverse: that the statement is figurative language for God bestowing special honour unto humankind, which he did not confer unto the rest of creation.”¹

Christian ante-Nicene scholars, like Irenaeus and Tertullian and later theologians from Augustine to Luther and Calvin also held a wide variety of opinions on what exactly the **imago Dei** was. However, most of the Christian arguments from these scholars usually revolve around exactly what **selem** and **dmut** (*image and likeness in English*) mean and are often summarized in veiled theological

¹https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image_of_God

terminology like “whether the image of God refers to aspects of human existence or to a reality in God in which humans participate.”²

Looking at the context of “image” and “likeness”

Many Christians still want to take the *imago Dei* out of context by suggesting that God, YHVH, has eyes or arms and legs or things like that. They have concentrated on the English words *image* and *likeness* rather than looking at the context of these words. Although word studies in the original language can be very valuable in gaining a more nuanced understanding of scripture, it is often easier and more valuable for Christians to actually place scriptures in context to avoid eisegesis. Therefore, this paper will attempt to set Genesis 1:26-7 in context.

Mise en Scene: Film examples of context

In film, setting context is referred to as “*mise en scene*” or setting the scene. *Mise en scene* gives the audience the big picture so the story can be told into that big picture.

Mise en scene is often done at the beginning of a movie with the title sequence, as in *Star Wars*.

Star Wars

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away
It is a period of civil war.
Rebel spaceships, striking
from a hidden base, have won
their first victory against
the evil Galactic Empire.

During the battle, Rebel
spies managed to steal secret
plans to the Empire's
ultimate weapon, the DEATH
STAR, an armored space
station with enough power to
destroy an entire planet.

Pursued by the Empire's
sinister agents, Princess
Leia races home aboard her

²<https://www.saet.ac.uk/Christianity/ImageofGod>

starship, custodian of the
stolen plans that can save
her people and restore
freedom to the galaxy...³

Then you have Lucas' famous pan down into the action of the rebel ship coming into the open frame as it is being attacked by an imperial cruiser, which completely covers the open frame as it comes into view. After the title sequence you are introduced to the story of Luke and Leia and Han and Obi Wan and Darth Vader. And of course, the emperor and his death star.

Casablanca

You have the same type of intro in one of the greatest movies of all time, Casablanca, which begins with:

With the coming of the Second World war...
... many eyes in imprisoned Europe turned hopefully, or desperately...
... toward the freedom of the Americas.
Lisbon became the great embarkation point.
But not everybody could get to Lisbon directly.
And so a torturous, roundabout refugee trail sprang up.
Paris to Marseilles...
... across the Mediterranean to Oran.
Then, by train or auto or foot, across the rim of Africa...
... to Casablanca in French Morocco.
Here, the fortunate ones, through money or influence or luck...
... might obtain exit visas and scurry to Lisbon.
And from Lisbon to the New World.
But the others wait in Casablanca.
And wait and wait...
... and wait.⁴

Now the story of Richard "Rick" Blaine and his Café American, Ilsa and Victor, and the Nazis and the free French can be told in context. And of course the story of Sam and his piano. As they all wait in Casablanca.

You set the scene and then tell the story in that context.

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXDnFYu91vY>

⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5F37af0quIM>

What is the context of “In his image”?

Christian and Jewish scholars often refer to Genesis 1:1 to 2:3 as the creation poem because it is a poem about creation.

Many conservative evangelical writers over the last decade or so (2010-2023) have written that Genesis 1:1 to 2:3 should be viewed as historical narrative rather than poetry. It is likely these evangelical writers are battling the idea that evolution can fit into the framework of Genesis 1 advanced by more “liberal Christian scholars.”

Liberal theologians have tried to meld evolution into Christian theology by proclaiming that instead of each day of Genesis 1 being a literal evening and a morning, each day in Genesis 1 is actually an age consisting of many millions to billions of years. And by extension an age during which evolution supposedly did its work under God’s guidance.

This downplaying the poetry of Genesis 1 by more conservative evangelical scholars is likely because of the way current western society thinks about poems today. However, Genesis 1:1 to 2:3 is a poem. But just because the first chapter of Genesis is written in poetry does not mean it is an allegory. Just the opposite should be inferred if we take these verses in the context they were written.

Why Poetry?

When you go back to the time Genesis 1 was written by Moses, and unlike liberal scholars who usually parrot Wellhausen’s “document theory”, this author believes Moses, probably with the help from some material taken out of Egypt during the Exodus, and with the inspiration of YHVH, did write the first five books of the Bible three and a half millennia ago. The reader should be aware scrolls were very expensive even at the time of Jesus, 2 millennia ago, and would have been even more expensive 3 and half millennia ago. A lot of people could not read. So things like mnemonic poems were used to help with memorization. Especially memorization of important things.

Memorization and Mnemonics

What’s a mnemonic? “A mnemonic device memory trick or memory device is any learning technique that aids information retention or retrieval in the human memory, often by associating the information with something that is easier to

remember.”⁵ An examination of modern propaganda or advertising demonstrates how this principle is used. The reader can probably finish reciting the slogans below.

- Two all-beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles ...

Going back just a little further:

- I can't believe I ate ...
- Plop, plop, fizz, fizz, oh what ...

Or even to classic literature:

- It was the best of times, it was

Memorization breeds familiarity, which allows someone to use that memorized data more readily as they walk the path of life.

What's different about creation story in the Bible?

The creation story, the start of the story of mankind and our age, the *mise en scene* for the books of Moses and the rest of scripture, is very important.

The creation story in Genesis 1 is also very different from the creation stories of the pagans, like the Greeks. A review of Bullfinch's Greek mythology is too long and convoluted to go into detail here, but pagan stories of creation have the nothingness, often referred to as chaos, giving birth to life, usually in the form of some kind of God being or beings, which down the line give birth to man. This is a version of Darwinism from 3 or 4 millennia ago!

In ancient pagan theology, life, including the gods, came from nothing. Today Hinduism and Buddhism have similar creation stories – although a lot of Buddhists would say creation does not matter because everything is cyclical. For those who are unfamiliar with Buddhism, their belief system centers around something similar to the force from Star Wars, at least from this author's perspective.

⁵ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mnemonic>

The creation poem of Genesis 1 has God, whose name is revealed as YHVH a little later (Gen 2:4) in the story, giving birth via creation to everything. Again, this is drastically different from the pagan creation myths of the nations around Israel. The creation pattern of Genesis 1 is, “And God said,” and poof, it is created.

Creation & Energy

Genesis 1 is not the only place in scripture creation is mentioned. Genesis 1:1 is referenced at the beginning of the gospel of John and Job 38 has the angels singing for joy at the creation of the universe. The glory of the creation of the physical mentioned in Job 38:7 may be explained by Einstein’s famous equation,

$$E=mc^2$$

We know that equation works because of the atomic bomb. Just a small amount of mass can be transformed into a huge amount of energy. However, that equation can easily be transposed into

$$E/c^2=m$$

That means that it takes a huge amount of energy to create mass and that transformative energy is almost certainly what that angelic realm was singing about in Job 38.

Yet the creation of humanity was an even greater accomplishment according to scripture. Genesis 2:7 states, *“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”* And later in the chapter, in verse 24, *“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”*

God came first. He created everything, spiritual and physical. The flow of the story, the creation poem of Genesis 1 goes, “And God said,” and it was created... and God said and it was created...and God said and it was created. That brings us to Genesis 1:26-7.

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”

Everything about creation was good

The totality that God created, including mankind, is described in Genesis 1:31. *“And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.”*

The word good (**tob**) in Genesis 1:31 is the same word used to describe the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but as with many words, the context helps determine the meaning of the word. The usage of **tob** in Genesis 1:31 is not meant to be a righteous judgment of creation, but an examination of how the job of creation went. When scripture states everything was very good, it is stating it was just the way God wanted it. It is not insinuating that the creation was righteous or unrighteous. But the process was finished and came out the way God wanted it.

Therefore the very beginning of the true creator God’s revelation to mankind is this big, long poem, which means it is very important, telling us how YHVH is the creator and why we were created. And it depicts how all that He has created in this age is under the dominion of man. Man was to be fruitful and multiply, which means humankind was chosen to continue His creation.

God also states He is going to make man with some of His godly attributes in Genesis 1:26-7. But those attributes bestowed upon mankind require both a man and a woman according to scripture. What creative attribute(s) require a man and a woman, a husband and a wife? The answer is kind of obvious and agrees with Philo’s and Gaon’s position. Humans can procreate, creating a human life.

What did God tell Adam & Eve?

There were two great commands in the garden of Eden, similar to the two great commandments Jesus gave in Matthew. But of course, the commandments in Eden were different because the context of the commands was different.

Jesus’ two great commands are found in the 22nd chapter of Matthew.

Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all they heart, and with all thy soul, and with all they mind.

This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (Matt 22:36-39)

The two great commands in the garden of Eden? One is a big no, and the other is a big yes.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. (Gen 1:28)

This was delivered before the serpent was introduced into the story. And the no:

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. (Gen 2:17)

So near the end of the creation story, you have the creator God saying, this time when I create, this creation is going to resemble me. And the godly attribute that I will bestow upon mankind requires a man and a woman.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. (Gen 1:28)

Genesis 2:22-3 has a little more detail on this.

“And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”

And Moses re-emphasizes exactly how mankind was made in God’s image and what godly attributes He gave man in Genesis 5. Moses uses the same words for *image* and *likeness* that he used in Genesis 1:26.

*This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness (**dmuṯ, dem-ooth**), after his image (**selem, tseh'-lem**); and called his name Seth. (Gen 5:1-3)*

Adam and Eve's son Seth was made in his parents' likeness and in his parents' image (as were later children and Cain & Abel), just as God created us in His likeness. The creator God gave us the power to create beings that were also in His likeness, after His image.

Man can reproduce

Mankind can reproduce, but the angelic realm does not reproduce with each other.

Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. (Matt 22:29-30)

I am certain some readers of this article must be thinking that earthly animals, all the way down to microbes, procreate, so what makes human procreation so special? This author believes that the procreation all around mankind displays how special the Earth is and that often times we forget how special it is. But God, through Solomon, lets us know that although the animals procreate, their procreation is not the same as ours.

Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth? (Eccl 3:21)

No matter how much you love Muffy the dog or Tiger the cat, they will not be in the resurrection. When they die, there is nothing retained of them, but there is something retained and returned to God when a man or woman dies.

Not a separate spirit, like Aristotle and Plato suggested. That idea of separation of spiritual and physical is alien to the biblical concept of what man is.

This author rejects the Platonic idea that man is a spirit trapped in a physical body. I also reject the Mormon or Jewish Kabbalah idea that there are a bunch of souls in heaven just waiting to be born into fleshly bodies. That when all of those souls have found a body, the physical creation will be finished.

Up until about 15 years ago, when it came to human creation, I thought man consisted of three parts: body, mind, and spirit. The *nephesh* (translated body or soul) in Genesis 2:7 was formed from the clay of the earth. This plus the head (or

intellect) plus the heart (or character) is what formed a man. You had to have all three working together to be a human being.

More recently, it became obvious that a fourth element, the spirit of man, tied the other three together to form a complete human. It required all of those in one harmonious package to be a human being.

Genesis 1 and 2 depict a human being as an integrated whole. So does Psalms.

I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. (Ps 139:14)

The Integrated Whole

But do we really see, and thus understand, everything about what a human being is? I began to broaden my definition of man is about 15 years ago when I was reading an article about heart transplant patients. Just a nerd reading random things. These kinds of stories do not happen with every heart transplant, but they happen with a lot of them.

Many of these stories are similar to ones that follow.

A heart recipient who had no musical talent and was not interested in music, but the heart donor was an accomplished piano player. After the heart transplant, the recipient not only enjoyed the piano, but could play the piano. It is not that the recipient learned the piano. After the transplant, they just knew how to play the piano.

The same kind of story was told about a man who was so unartistic he had trouble drawing stick figures, but after a heart transplant from someone who was an artist, the person could draw tremendous landscapes.

A more recent article on the corruption behind organ transplants covers some of the same material about attributes being transferred from one human to another with an organ transplant.⁶

⁶<https://www.midwesterndoctor.com/p/the-unseen-cost-of-organ-transplants>

What is the heart in the Bible?

The Old Testament states the heart is not just the seat of character, but also of thought. But how can a muscle which pumps blood contain knowledge?

“The heart's energy is said to reach about three feet outside of the physical body... In fact, the heart has 40,000 neurons and the ability to process, learn, and remember...With an electrical component about 60 times greater and an electromagnetic energy field 5000 times greater than the brain's, the heart has a significant influence on the body down to the cellular level.”⁷

Stories of not just Skills, but Knowledge being Transferred

There are more stories about a heart transplant patient whose foreign language skills were non-existent, at best. The heart donor was multi-lingual. After the transplant, the recipient could speak multiple languages. Not learn them. Just speak them and understand them because they now know the languages.

Muscle? Energy? Electrical?

So intellect, knowledge and character are tied to a muscle that pumps blood. And the heart is also electrical. As is the entire human body.

You put a lid on the pot to boil water faster, just like your lovely wife is always telling you to do. When you take the lid off, you know you should have used that potholder. What is going on? Your fingers have detected damage being done by heat and send a warning message of pain. Your fingers don't have intellect like your brain and heart appear to, but they have nerves. And those nerves have a chemical called acetylcholine in them. When you feel that pain in the fingertips, the acetylcholine undergoes a chemical reaction that produces electricity. And that electricity travels to the next nerve cell and causes the same reaction with the same result. All the way to your brain. Your brain detects and interprets what that electrical impulse means, mostly from experience. And your brain uses exactly the same process to send back a message, “Let go of the lid, dummy!”

Thus all humans, by definition, are electrochemical beings. As well as being energetic. If you have never seen what happens when Mr. Sperm knocks on Miss (soon to be Mrs.) Egg and enters in, there is a dazzling display of electro-magnetic

⁷<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/building-the-habit-of-hero/202011/the-hearts-electromagnetic-field-is-your-superpower>

energy.⁸ Energy in the form of light is released, almost like 4th of July fireworks display. If the reader has access to a computer, they should take two minutes to review the you-tube video listed below before continuing.

Humans are head, heart, nephesh, and various forms of energy, all integrated together by the spirit in man.

Perhaps sounding like one of those late night commercials, humans are even more.

Another example of human integration

A lot of people will be familiar with Arnica gel is. It is part of homeopathic medicine. You bang your knee on the edge of the bed in the hotel room because you are in unfamiliar territory. You know you are not only going to get a nasty bruise, but a big goose egg on your leg. You rub Arnica gel on and you will still get a little bruise. No way around that because it was forming before you applied arnica. But it will be a little bruise with no goose egg. That is homeopathy at work.

Homeopathy is making a comeback as medicine the US. It never lost its appeal in Europe because Rockefeller's money, as great as it was, could only totally buy off the medical schools in the US and not Europe using the Flexner report of 1910.

How do you make homeopathic medicine? You take a substance, and you dilute it, usually in water, while stirring it to "energize" it. Once it is diluted, it is distributed on a little sugar pill or in a gel to be rubbed on and when you need the medicine, you put the sugar pill under your tongue and let it dissolve or you rub on the gel.

You need to make homeopathy stronger? You dilute it even more. And to make it really strong, you dilute it so that none of the original substance can even be detected. As a polymer chemist from MIT, I am writing that this cannot work... *chemically*. You dilute a medicine, a chemical compound, so it is not there and it becomes stronger? That is not how chemistry works, even with a catalyst.

But as a former doubter, I can tell you homeopathy has worked on me, my wife, our friends, and I first saw it work on my two-year twins more than two decades

⁸<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/zN-HINKQirk>

ago. This could not have been the placebo effect explanation on two-year-olds because we had tried an array of standard medicine and those had failed. Only to see homeopathy bring relief and healing in minutes.

Since homeopathy cannot work, yet it does work, what is going on?

As an engineer and not a doctor who poooops anything not approved by the AMA, I am going to suggest that homeopathy does not work chemically because it cannot, but does work by some other mechanism. It could be electromagnetic, but that seems unlikely. A lot of homeopathic practitioners believe that homeopathy operates on frequencies, that is on vibrational energy. Almost certainly by helping the human body return to its natural frequency or frequencies and thus heal itself.

So where does the vibrational energy come from? Quantum mechanics describes how everything is vibrating. Electrons go about the nucleus. The protons and neutrons interact with quarks and neutrinos while vibrating. Quantum mechanics mathematically describes how all physical matter is vibrating. Thus the most natural explanation for how homeopathy works is that it interacts with our frequencies and sets them back to their “normal pattern”.

So we are head, heart, nephesh, electrochemical and energy and vibration, all integrated together by the spirit in man. And likely even more.

I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. (Ps 139:14)

Example of integration: the human Microbiome

Medical adaption of the understanding of the importance of the human microbiome for human health is less than a quarter of a century old. A human body is made up of 30 to 35 trillion human cells. Each human’s microbiome, located mainly in the digestive system stretching from the mouth to the anus, is made up of close to 40 trillion non-human cells, like bacteria, archaea, fungi, and viruses. Thus the human body has more non-human “cells” helping it function than human cells. These symbiotic entities are not only essential for digestion, but it has been discovered are the backbone of the human immune system. There is old saying, “Happy wife, happy life.” Even medical science now says, “Happy microbiome, happy life.”

In a healthy human being, the microbiome is not just symbiotic, but essential for good health. But not all of those 35 trillion plus non-human cells are friendly and symbiotic. Just like most things in physical existence, you have a few bad actors thrown into the mix. Perhaps you have heard of people who have a candida infection or perhaps you have even had one.

Candida is a fungus and it has no real effect on a healthy human when its numbers are kept in check by the other actors in the human microbiome. However, candida loves sugar. And if you feed it sugar by feeding yourself lots of sugar, it can grow out of control and overwhelm “the good actors” in the human microbiome. And those who have had a candida infection can attest to the fact that these fungi in your gut give you cravings to send even more sugar down so they can grow even more, which decreases the good actors even more. Fungi in your gut can interact with your intelligence to drive you into self-destructive behavior for the human, but that is good for the fungi? The answer is yes.

Thus the human microbiome of each human is made up of more non-human cells than the body has human cells and is designed to keep human beings healthy. Yet another layer of integration each and every healthy human needs.

Back to creation

When God made man a living nephesh, a living soul, He breathed life into Adam and Eve. God created man from the dust of the ground and gave us genes and chromosomes and DNA and RNA. He gave Adam and Eve their spirit, the spirit of man. Genesis 5:3 tells us that Adam begat Seth in his image and likeness. But how did Adam and Eve’s children get the breath of life and the spirit of man? How did you and I get the spirit of man and how did our kids get that spirit?

We know that human fathers give 23 chromosomes to their offspring through their sperm and the mother gives another 23 chromosomes in their eggs through the process of meiosis, which then gives the child a total of 46 chromosomes. But we pass on more than physical traits via genes and chromosomes. We also pass on the breath of life that God breathed into us. And somehow through that process we also give our children the spirit of man, which obviously originated with God. Numbers 27:16 states that YHVH is the God of spirits, thus all spirit must originate with Him. Mankind was given the ability to pass physical traits, energy, vibrations and even spirit to their offspring. As Uncle Ben told Peter Parker in Spiderman, “With great power comes great responsibility.”

And God said all these things interacting together were good (Gen 1:31). It is just the way God wanted it. And this creation process, as marvelous and mystical as it is, also left mankind incomplete, just the way God wanted it.

Which takes us back to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and what it was intended for. Surveying Christians that this author has frequent interaction with about what happened when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit revealed most usually viewed this is kind of like putting a USB stick with data into your computer and the data was downloaded. Data about what was good and what was evil.

Is that what happened? I don't think so.

Look at what the serpent says in Genesis 3:5, *“For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”*

Satan is telling Adam and Eve they don't need no stinking knowledge from God. They can determine what is good and evil, right and wrong. That voice echoes very loudly in today's society with the mantra, “I have my own truth.” The mantra of human beings having their own truth, without regard to their creator's truth, is not the design God has for a complete and perfected human being.

The book of Deuteronomy is written in the form of a Suzerain covenant, a contract between a king and his vassals that was common millennia ago, and covers what is good and what is evil. After going through most of the stipulations of the contract, God tells the nation of Isreal,

*See, I have set before thee this day life and good (**tob**), and death and evil (**ra'**);.. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them. (Deut 30:15,19-20)*

Deuteronomy 30 uses the same Hebrew words for good and evil that are used in describing the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God designed us to be incomplete human beings until we understood what good and evil were, how

God defines good and evil, and then combine the spirit of man, which is in every man and women, with the spirit of God.

A comparison of God's definition of good and evil to man's definition can be done by examining the creation of mankind. God said He created them man and woman, two genders, just like animal kind. But today's society says no, no, no. There are actually dozens or perhaps hundreds of human genders, so your God does not know what He is talking about. That is mankind rejecting God's good and evil to make their own definition of good and evil. II Corinthians 11:14 states, *"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."*

Humankind was designed to learn and understand God's ways as He taught them to us. And the design was that we would then choose to follow God's ways or not once we had that knowledge. This obedience and understanding places us in covenant with God. Or rejecting His ways shows we don't want to covenant with God. The church of Laodicea is told God will spit them out of His mouth because they are vacillating and not choosing either way in Revelations 3:16.

Of course, the spirit of man was breathed into man from God, so it must also be a spirit of God. So, we were created to have yet another layer of integration with God by the combining of these two spirits.

God's covenant requires humans to acknowledge that God sets what is good and evil, right and wrong. He is the king, the creator and dad. Then humans were given free will so they could choose to do right or wrong.

Who decides good and evil?

God defined what is good and evil in the garden of Eden. It is entirely likely that God himself taught Adam and Eve for weeks or years, but likely not decades (Gen 3:8 suggests that Adam and Eve had a long standing relationship with God because they knew the voice of God). Some scholars have disputed this and written if God taught Adam and Eve right from wrong, good from bad, for years, why wasn't Eve pregnant in the garden? That is easily explained when you see the average age for the first childbirth in the pre-diluvian world was much closer to 100 than to 20 (Gen. 5).

Mankind listened to the serpent and told God they would determine their own good and evil with the influence of Satan (Eph. 2.2) helping to guide them by their actions. No matter how wonderfully we were made, we need God's knowledge of

what is good and what is evil to be perfected. When we substitute our good for God's good, which is usually Satan's definition of good, like in the garden of Eden, then we cannot be perfected the way God wants us.

God tells us, *"I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings."* (Jer 17:10)

God gave us His words, His instructions, so that we can have life more abundantly.⁹ Our heavenly Father made us so wonderfully it can be hard to comprehend but left it up to us to determine if we will fulfill our potential.

Will we take His knowledge of good and evil and fulfill the destiny He has for us?
"With great power comes great responsibility."

⁹ John 10:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.